Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

homemakers' chat
FOR USE IN NON-COMMERCIAL BROADCASTS ONLY
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Reserve 1.9 Im3th

Tuesday May 2, 1944

ANSWERS FROM gardening specialists of
U. S. Department of Agriculture

LIBRARY
CURRENT SERIAL RECORD
APR 26 1944
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

QUESTION BOX:

What plant for canning?
How garden keeps down point value?
Gasoline for gardeners? A

Everywhere you turn these days you hear talk about Victory Gardens. More people than ever, it seems, are planting 'em this year. So today our garden experts have taken three questions on this subject - three out of many that are being asked - because each touches a different phase of the subject, and because each one has a vital bearing on good Victory gardening:

"What vegetables are best for canning purposes?

Last year many ardent Victory gardeners canned anything their gardens had to offer. In some cases, that was fine. In others a little more foresight would have helped.

This year many are planting their gardens so that they will produce a better and more balanced choice, and thereby have better canned goods for next winter.

Popular choices, for home canning are tomatoes and fruits which you can safely can in a simple boiling water bath; and snap beans, beets, green lima beans, sweet corn, and peas, if you have a steam pressure canner.

Don't plant the last three -- lima beans, sweet corn and peas - unless your garden is large enough, because they take up a lot of space in proportion to what they yield.

Victory gardeners and canners are learning that the two "arts" growing and preserving, go together. It means they not only have good green edibles during the summer, but that they can continue to enjoy the fruits of their work the year 'round.

They are learning to garden so that they will have a succession of vegetables coming on at intervals instead of having a huge batch ready for canning all at one time. And this means, too, that they can harvest their tomatoes, snap beans, beets lima beans, sweet corn, peas, and the like, when they are young and tender.

Here's an example: snap beans are best for canning when half to three-fourths grown. Beets are best when about an inch and a half in diameter. Lima beans, peas, and corn are ready when they are still green and tender.

Even a few days difference in age of these vegetables will give the home canner an inferior product instead of a superior and delectable one.

And now for our second question "Won't scaling down of ration point values affect gardening?"

Victory gardeners everywhere have found out that a good garden makes any ration points, go farther. This is true not only for canned vegetable points but where meat and other processed food points are concerned.

A few vegetables cooked with a meat dish, the free use of vegetables in frequent soups, a vegetable salad every day make ration points go much farther and tend to make meals better and of greater nutrition value.

Yes, Victory gardeners are helping to keep ration values down.

Price Administrator Chester A. Bowles says "Future ration points depend on our 1944 Victory Gardens." He explains: "It will be possible to keep ration points at, or even near, present levels only if food output this year is greater than ever before, and if home canners and commercial packers top their record packs of last year." He praised the Victory Garden program highly.

And that is putting it pretty plainly, and squarely up to the fraternity of Victory gardeners. In that light, the job of raising a Victory Garden and the wisdom of planting things which will be best for canning, takes on added significance.

And now we come to our last question.

Many people have asked it, and here it is in general terms "Is extra gasoline available for Victory Gardeners?"

For the answer we have referred to the Office of Price Administration again. We are assured that Victory gardeners will again be granted special gasoline rations to travel to and from their plots this summer. See your ration board for details, of course. Under certain conditions as much as 300 miles of travel for the season is allowed. The exact amounts, as you may imagine, depend on the particular needs.

We wish we had time for more questions, but it is good to know that there is so much interest in Victory Gardening. In a survey conducted by the American Institute of Public Opinion it was found that citizens of the U. S. A. canned 36 percent more food last year than in 1942. City folks, and this may surprise you, showed a gain of 41 percent, in cities and towns under 10,000 population. In cities over 10,000 the gain was 32 percent.

More Victory Gardens and more canning in these towns and cities is indicated for this year than last, we are told. When you remember that ration point values and gardening and canning are closely related, it is not hard to see why this is true.

# # # #